



Chapter 11 **Youth Development**

Cluster 4 Asset Profile

After identifying a number of programs, services and activities for youth and their locations within Cluster 4, the focus group began to identify pockets of “negative recreation”, such as gang-related activity. These pockets included the areas surrounding Considine Center and Hutchinson Middle School, the North End, and 12th Street. It was also mentioned that the Lodge Freeway acts as a divider, making it difficult at times for young people to travel across the bridges without fear of entering another gang’s territory.

The focus group brainstormed gathering spots for young people within the cluster. These locations may or may not have supervised activities intended for youth. East Jefferson Avenue between Belle Isle and the Chrysler Freeway (I-375) was identified as a problem location for teens to cruise. In warm weather, Belle Isle is often so crowded with vehicles in the evening that the police are forced to close the island. The VFW Hall at St. Aubin and the parking lots of liquor stores were also cited as places where teens tend to gather. Youth have also been seen playing basketball on portable hoops on side streets and in alleys. The group stated that there is little for young people to do because the schools and churches are locked and the parks suffer from a lack of equipment and are closed and patrolled after dark.

Primary Youth Development Issues

- Insufficient or costly day care for children pre-school age or younger
- Low number of hours that school facilities are available
- Parents not parenting which includes lack of parental involvement and parenting skills
- Violence in schools
- Low number of churches involved in providing services for youth
- Lack of transportation to existing services
- Insufficient curricula in schools
- Lack of opportunities for youth to receive technological training
- High drop out rates
- Large class sizes
- Tracking and labeling of students
- Lack of community involvement and support
- Lack of funding for programs
- Vacant homes that are not secured become hang-outs for teen
- Sexual activity among teens
- High level of STD’s, HIV, and AIDS
- Teen pregnancy rates
- Fascination with mothering at an early age
- Lack of positive role models
- Need for mentoring by senior citizens, more inter-generational mixing
- Low level of morals among youth
- Lack of activities outside of school

Existing Programs and Services:

QNAC - sponsored by the coalition of Urban Affairs

Detroit Recreation Department

- Recreation Teen Councils
- Youth and Teen Special Programs
- After School Recreation Programs

Michigan Metropolitan Girl Scouting

- Girl Scouting
- Tutoring
- Teen Pregnancy Counseling

Wayne State University

- Job Training and Placement
- Tutoring

Wayne County Community College

- College Counseling

WIGO

- Recreation

Butzel Family Center

- Recreation

Coleman Young

- Recreation
- Arts and Crafts

Considine Center

- Recreation
- Various Other Activities

Wigle Center

- Recreation

Wheeler

- Recreation

New Calvary Baptist Church

- Recreation

Church of the Messiah

- Recreation

The Family Place Collaborative

- Pregnancy Counseling

Downtown YMCA

- Recreation

Detroit Police Department (7th Precinct)

- Explorers
- Police Athletic League (PAL)
- Juveniles and the Law
- Cooper Community Development

Response to Issues

Suggested strategies included developing schools which functioned as the center of communities by remaining open 24 hours a day and where accountable on a local level. This level of accountability would be achieved by giving the principals the necessary authority to make decisions regarding their schools and involving parents, teachers, and community members in providing a quality education to their students. Understanding the environment which schools currently operate in order to define the needed changes, was also seen as a necessity. Lower class sizes, recreational opportunities in schools, technological training, vocational education, inter-generational tutoring and mentoring along with higher levels of community involvement were identified as desirable elements in a new curriculum for students in Cluster 4.